THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement entered with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) 66,822 remaining unconnected villages in the country are to be provided Village Public Telephones (VPTs) by November, 2007. This excludes villages having population less than 100, lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas. As on 31.08.2006, 30,251 villages have been provided with VPTs and as on 30.09.2007, a total of 50,520 VPTs have been provided. The remaining 16,302 villages are likely to be provided with VPT facility by June, 2008, primarily due to delay in availability of satellite transponders which were allocated earlier on Indian Satellite, INSAT-4C.

(d) Yes, Sir. An amount of Rs. 88.58 crore has been disbursed by USOF as subsidy support for provision of these VPTs as on 30th September, 2007.

Allocation of 2G Spectrum

9. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the methodology followed for allocation of 2G Spectrum till now;

(b) whether it is a fact that a net set of guidelines have been issued by his Ministry for allocation of 2G Spectrum; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The initial spectrum for 2G is allotted to the mobile telecom operators in accordance with the relevant provisions of their Service License Agreement. With growth of service and increased subscriber base, additional spectrum is allotted, taking into account the subscriber based eligibility criteria, justification and subject to availability of spectrum in a telecom service area.

(b) and (c) A Committee has been set up to recommend the revised subscriber based spectrum allocation criteria for allotment of 2G Spectrum. However, the matter is *sub-judice* in Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT)

Status of Postal Life Insurance Scheme cases

10. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a number of cases for settlement of Postal Life Insurance Scheme are pending with Dak Adalat during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof and how many cases have been settled and how many cases are pending during this year;

(c) whether it is a fact that some files relating to the cases are not traceable due to which the common people suffer heavily; and

(d) the reasons for delay and action being taken against the officials who are responsible for loss of files?